

Application No.: 09/437378

Docket No.: OIQ-001RCE2

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-13, 15-24 and 27-38 are presently pending in the application of which claims 1, 6, 9, 17, 19, 22 and 27 are independent. Claims 1, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 16-19, 22, 24 and 27 have been amended. No claims have been added or deleted. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1, 6, 19 and 20 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §112 as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically the Examiner objected to the claim limitation "communication holding information" as lacking sufficient description. For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

A discussion of the use of a communication holding user information in the present invention appears throughout the specification. Most particularly, the Examiner's attention is respectfully directed to the discussion of the forwarding of a cookie holding user information to the redirection facility that takes place beginning with the last partial paragraph on page 7 and continuing on page 8 and to Figure 2 and Figure 4. The cookie (which is a data structure) is sent as part of a "communication". The Examiner's attention is further directed to originally filed claim 2 which includes the limitation "receiving a communication holding information about the user and using this information to identify the user preference" and originally filed claim 3 which includes the limitation "wherein the communication comprises a cookie".

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of all of the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §112.

Claim Rejections Pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 11-13, 15, 18-20, 22, 24 and 27-33 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome et al. (United States Patent No. 6, 779, 118 B1, hereafter "Ikudome") in view of Ferguson et al (United States Patent No.: 5, 819, 092, hereafter "Ferguson"). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

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Summary of Claimed Invention

The claimed invention provides a mechanism for a hyperlink associated with a semantic value to be resolved based on a user-supplied preference to retrieve digital objects. For example, if a user that clicks on a hyperlink referencing certain content has access to both subscription-based services and non-subscription based services, the user determines which of the services is to be used in resolving the hyperlink to one or more resources for the content. On the other hand, where a user does not subscribe to a subscription-based service, the hyperlink may be resolved by non-subscription-based services when the user clicks on the hyperlink. The user-supplied preference enables a hyperlink to be resolved differently based upon whether the user has access to subscription-based services and/or non-subscription-based services.

The claimed invention provides a controlled vocabulary that is used to specify a unique variety of hyperlink. The hyperlink contains a semantic value and a uniform resource locator (URL). The URL is not for a service provided to resolve the hyperlink, but rather refers to a hyperlink redirection facility. The hyperlink redirection facility receives user-supplied information regarding user preferences for resolution services (in one implementation through the use of a cookie). The hyperlink redirection facility modifies the original request to take into account the user preference and returns the modified request to the user for forwarding to a service provider for request resolution. The service provider receives the modified request and directs the request to a resolution facility that provides resources, such as search results. The resources are then returned to the user by the service provider.

Summary of Ikudome

Ikudome discusses a data redirection system for redirecting a user's data based on a stored rule set. The Ikudome system describes the use of a redirection server which enforces a rule set associated with a particular user ID. The redirection server is informed of the IP address assigned to a user for a particular session. The redirection server sits between the user and the Internet or some other network and filters packets. Actions performed by the redirection server based on the rule set associated with the user include restricting the amount of time a user can access certain web sites, blocking access to web sites, and providing redirection away from a requested web site to a different web site by providing redirection information embedded in a web page to the user's browser.

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Summary of Ferguson

Ferguson discusses a visual editing system for creating commercial online computer services. The editing system creates services which have a number of subservices. One of the subservices described in Ferguson is for a hyperlink editor subtool. The hyperlink editor subtool allows a developer to assign attributes to hyperlinks. One of the available attributes is a semantics attribute which allows additional structure in the online service (see col. 26).

Argument

In the "Response to Arguments" section of the Office Action, the Examiner argued that the previous claim amendments submitted by the Applicants failed to distinguish the claimed invention from the cited Ikudome system which routes everything through the redirection server. Accordingly Applicants have amended their claims to distinguish the claimed invention from Ikudome by specifically noting that the claimed invention selectively processes user requests for information. More particularly, Applicants have amended each of their independent claims to clarify that only those user requests for information that originate with the selection of a controlled vocabulary abstract hyperlink of the present invention utilize a redirection server while other requests are handled in a more direct conventional manner. This claim limitation is distinctly different from the system of Ikudome which is much more resource intensive in that it requires packet filtering of all requests for information submitted by a user. Put another way, the Ikudome system does not selectively process requests, but rather processes all requests by sending all requests to a redirection server.

Since all of the requests in Ikudome are processed using the redirection server, there is also no need for the links selected by a user in the Ikudome system to refer to the redirection server (an additional claim limitation that is found in each of Applicants' independent claims). There is also no motivation to combine Ikudome with Ferguson or any other reference in which the links refer directly to a redirection server since the Ikudome system already routes everything through the redirection server.

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Accordingly, since the combination of references fails to teach or suggest all of the elements of Applicants independent claims, Applicants request the allowance of claims 1, 2, 4, 9, 11-13, 15, 18-20, 22, 24 and 27-33.

Dependent claims 3, 10, 21 and 23 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome in view of Ferguson in further view of Ebrahim (United States Patent Number 6, 154, 777). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner cited Ebrahim as teaching the communication of a cookie. However, claims 3, 10, 21 and 23 are all dependent upon the respective independent claims discussed above and Ebrahim fails to teach or suggest the limitations missing from Ikudome and Ferguson. Accordingly, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejections directed to claims 3, 10, 21 and 23.

Claims 5, 6 and 16 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome in view of Ferguson in further view of Kenner (United States Patent Number 6, 112, 239). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner cited Kenner as teaching the use of a second service provider that is used to service the request when the service provider fails to fully service the request. However, dependent claims 5 and 16 are dependent upon the independent claims 1 and 9 respectively which were discussed above and Kenner fails to teach or suggest the limitations missing from the combination of Ikudome and Ferguson discussed above. Accordingly, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejections directed to claims 5, 6 and 16.

Independent claim 17 was rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome in view of Kenner et al (United States Patent Number 6,112,239, hereafter "Kenner"). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed.

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The Examiner cited Kenner as teaching the claim limitations of identifying a second service provider to service the request when the service provider fails to fully service the request and identifying the service provider that failed. However, Kenner does not provide the missing selective processing limitation added to independent claim 17 that was discussed above that is missing in both Ikudome and Ferguson. Accordingly, Applicants request the withdrawal of the rejection directed to claim 17.

Dependent claims 35-38 were rejected by the Examiner pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ikudome in view of Ferguson in further view of Bennett (United States Patent Number 4,970,681). For the reasons set forth below, those rejections are respectfully traversed

The Examiner cited Bennett as teaching the use of an ISSN number. However, since, Bennett fails to teach or suggest the selective processing limitation of the independent claims discussed above, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections directed to claims 35-38.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is now in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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